

Rosemont, IL - Congressman Kirk (R-Highland Park) and three NASA engineers unveiled new ways to reduce airport noise at today's O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission meeting. As the expansion of O'Hare becomes a reality, Rep. Kirk outlined new technology and procedures to reduce noise pollution.

"Congress is funding NASA's Quiet Aircraft Technology program to reduce aircraft noise in communities around major airports," said Kirk. "With airlines updating equipment, we have an opportunity to outfit new aircraft with noise reduction technology and navigation gear, enabling new approach procedures to significantly reduce noise pollution."

Kirk highlighted the new "Continuous Descent Approach" (CDA) as the new way to reduce aircraft noise. Under current procedures, aircraft reduce their altitude in a series of steps toward an airport. At the lowest step, aircraft generate a considerable amount of noise over surrounding communities.

Using the new CDA, airport noise will be greatly reduced by delaying a descent below 7,000 feet as late as possible. Once the final descent is ordered, the pilot reduces altitude with engines at idle thrust from a speed of 220 knots until landing. Studies of CDA procedures show a significant reduction of noise decibel levels compared to current approach procedures. CDA flight demonstrations at Louisville airport show early success in noise reduction. CDA procedures are already required for many aircraft at London's Heathrow airport.

"One of the major problems at O'Hare is noise pollution," said Kirk. "We should implement Continuous Descent Approach procedures at O'Hare to reduce noise in our surrounding communities."

Congressman Kirk's district includes many of the communities directly impacted by noise pollution from O'Hare airport including Glenview, Des Plaines, Arlington Heights, Rolling Meadows, Hoffman Estates and Inverness. Kirk urged officials at O'Hare to implement these new noise reduction procedures as soon as possible.